

Isab. Most strange: but yet most truly wil I speake,
That *Angelo's* forworne, is it not strange?
That *Angelo's* a murderer, is't not strange?
That *Angelo* is an adulterous thiefe,
An hypocrite, a virgin violator,
Is it not strange? and strange?

Duke. Nay it is ten times strange?

Isa. It is not truer he is *Angelo*,
Then this is all as true, as it is strange;
Nay, it is ten times true, for truth is truth
To th'end of reckning.

Duke. Away with her: poore soule
She speakes this, in th'infirmitie of sence.

Isa. Oh Prince, I coniure thee, as thou beleeu'st
There is another comfort, then this world,
That thou neglect me not, with that opinion
That I am touch'd with madnesse: make not impossible
That which but seemes vnlike, 'tis not impossible
But one, the wickedst caitiffe on the ground:
May seeme as shie, as graue, as iust, as absolute:
As *Angelo*, euen so may *Angelo*
In all his dressings, caracts, titles, formes,
Be an arch-villaine: Beleeue it, royall Prince
If he be lesse, he's nothing, but he's more,
Had I more name for badnesse.

Duke. By mine honesty
If she be mad, as I beleeue no other,
Her madnesse hath the oddest frame of sence,
Such a dependancy of thing, on thing,
As ere I heard in madnesse.

Isab. Oh gracious Duke
Harpe not on that; nor do not banish reason
For inequality, but let your reason serue
To make the truth appeare, where it seemes hid,
And hide the false seemes true.

Duke. Many that are not mad
Haue sure more lacke of reason:
What would you say?

Isab. I am the Sister of one *Claudio*,
Condemn'd vpon the Act of Fornication
To loose his head, condemn'd by *Angelo*,
I, (in probation of a Sisterhood)
Was sent to by my Brother; one *Lucio*
As then the Messenger.

Luc. That's I, and't like your Grace:
I came to her from *Claudio*, and desir'd her,
To try her gracious fortune with *Lord Angelo*,
For her poore Brothers pardon.

Isab. That's he indeede.

Duke. You were not bid to speake.

Luc. No, my good Lord,
Nor wish'd to hold my peace.

Duke. I wish you now then,
Pray you take note of it: and when you haue
A businesse for your selfe: pray heauen you then
Be perfect.

Luc. I warrant your honor.

Duke. The warrant's for your selfe: take heede to't.

Isab. This Gentleman told somewhat of my Tale.

Luc. Right.

Duke. It may be right, but you are the wrong
To speake before your time: proceed.

Isab. I went

To this pernicious Caitiffe Deputie.

Duke. That's somewhat madly spoken.

Isab. Pardon it.

The phrase is to the matter.

Duke. Mended againe: the matter: proceed.

Isab. In brieft, to set the needlesse proceffe by:
How I perswaded, how I praid, and kneel'd,
How he refeld me, and how I replide
(For this was of much length) the vild conclusion
I now begin with grieve, and shame to vtter.
He would not, but by gift of my chaste body
To his concupiscible intemperate lust
Release my brother; and after much debateiment,
My sisterly remorse, confutes mine honour,
And I did yeeld to him: But the next morne betimes,
His purpose sursetting, he sends a warrant
For my poore brothers head.

Duke. This is most likely.

Isab. Oh that it were as like as it is true. (speaks)

Duke. By heauen (fond wretch) knowst not what thou
Or else thou art suborn'd against his honor
In hatefull practise: first his Integrity
Stands without blemish: next it imports no reason,
That with such vehemency he should pursue
Faults proper to himselfe: if he had so offended
He would haue waigh'd thy brother by himselfe,
And not haue cut him off: some one hath set you on:
Confesse the truth, and say by whose aduice
Thou cam'st heere to complaine.

Isab. And is this all?
Then eh you blessed Ministers aboue
Keepe me in patience, and with ripened time
Vnfold the euill, which is heere wrapt vp
In countenance: heauen shield your Grace from woe,
As I thus wrong'd, hence vnbeleeued goe.

Duke. I know you'd faine be gone: An Officer:
To prison with her: Shall we thus permit
A blasting and a scandalous breath to fall,
On him so neere vs? This needs must be a practise;
Who knew of your intent and comming hither?

Isa. One that I would were heere, *Frier Lodowick*.

Duke. A ghostly Father, belike:

Who knows that *Lodowick*?

Luc. My Lord, I know him, 'tis a meddling Fryer,
I doe not like the man: had he been Lay my Lord,
For certaine words he spake against your Grace
In your retirement, I had swing'd him soundly.

Duke. Words against mee? this 'a good Fryer belike
And to set on this wretched woman here
Against our Substitute: Let this Fryer be found.

Luc. But yesternight my Lord, she and that Fryer
I saw them at the prison: a sawcy Fryar,
A very scuruy fellow.

Peter. Blessed be your Royall Grace:

I haue stood by my Lord, and I haue heard
Your royall care abus'd: first hath this woman
Most wrongfully accus'd your Substitute,
Who is as free from touch, or soyle with her
As she from one vngot.

Duke. We did beleeue no lesse,

Know you that *Frier Lodowick* that she speakes of?

Peter. I know him for a man diuine and holy,

Not scuruy, nor a temporary medler:

As he's reported by this Gentleman:

And on my trust, a man that neuer yet

Did (as he vouches) mis-report your Grace.

Luc. My Lord, most villanously, beleeue it.

Peter. Well: he in time may come to cleere himselfe;

But at this instant he is sicke, my Lord:

Of

Of a strange Feauor: vpon his moore request

Being come to knowledge; that there was complaint

Intended 'gainst *Lord Angelo*, came I hether

To speake as from his mouth, what he doth know

Is true, and false: And what he with his oath

And all probation will make vp full cleare

Whensoever he's conuicted: First for this woman,

To iustifie this worthy Noble man

So vulgarly and personally accus'd,

Her shall you heere disproued to her eyes,

Till she her selfe confesse it.

Duke. Good Frier, let's heare it:

Doe you not smile at this, *Lord Angelo*?

Oh heauen, the vanity of wretched fooles.

Giue vs some seates, Come cosen *Angelo*,

In this I'll be impartiall: be you Iudge

Of your owne Cause: Is this the Witnes Frier?

Enter Mariana.

First, let her shew your face, and after, speake.

Mar. Pardon my Lord, I will not shew my face

Vntill my husband bid me.

Duke. What, are you married?

Mar. No my Lord.

Duke. Are you a Maid?

Mar. No my Lord.

Duke. A Widow then?

Mar. Neither, my Lord.

Duke. Why you are nothing then: neither Maid, Wi-
dow, nor Wife?

Luc. My Lord, she may be a Puncke: for many of
them, are neither Maid, Widow, nor Wife.

Duke. Silence that fellow: I would he had some cause
to prattle for himselfe.

Luc. Well my Lord.

Mar. My Lord, I doe confesse I nere was married,

And I confesse besides, I am no Maid,

I haue known my husband, yet my husband

Knowes not, that euer he knew me.

Luc. He was drunk then, my Lord, it can be no better.

Duke. For the benefit of silence, would thou wert so to.

Luc. Well, my Lord.

Duke. This is no witnesse for *Lord Angelo*.

Mar. Now I come to't, my Lord.

Shee that accuses him of Fornication,

In selfe-same manner, doth accuse my husband,

And charges him, my Lord, with such a time,

When I'le depose I had him in mine Armes

With all th'effect of Loue.

Ang. Charges shee mee then me?

Mar. Not that I know.

Duke. No? you say your husband.

Mar. Why iust, my Lord, and that is *Angelo*,

Who thinks he knowes, that he nere knew my body,

But knows, he thinks, that he knowes *Isabels*.

Ang. This is a strange abuse: Let's see thy face.

Mar. My husband bids me, now I will vnmuske.

This is that face, thou cruell *Angelo*

Which once thou sworst, was worth the looking on:

This is the hand, which with a vowd contract

Was fast belockt in thine: This is the body

That tooke away the match from *Isabell*,

And did supply thee at thy garden-house

In her imagin'd person.

Duke. Know you this woman?

Luc. Carnallie she saies.

Duke. Sirha, no more.

Luc. Enoug my Lord.

Ang. My Lord, I must confesse, I know this woman,

And fince yeres since there was some speech of marriage

Betwixt my selfe, and her: which was broke off,

Partly for that her promis'd proportions

Came short of Composition: But in chiefe

For that her reputation was dis-valued

In leuitie: Since which time of fince yeres

I neuer spake with her, saw her, nor heard from her

Vpon my faith, and honor.

Mar. Noble Prince,

As there comes light from heauen, and words fro breath,

As there is sence in truth, and truth in vertue,

I am affianced this mans wife, as strongly

As words could make vp vowes: And my good Lord,

But Tuesday night last gon, in's garden house,

He knew me as a wife. As this is true,

Let me in safety raise me from my knees,

Or else for euer be confix'd here

A Marble Monument.

Ang. I did but smile till now,

Now, good my Lord, giue me the scope of Iustice,

My patience here is touch'd: I doe perceiue

These poore informall women, are no more

But instruments of some more mightier member

That sets them on. Let me haue way, my Lord

To finde this practise out.

Duke. I, with my heart,

And punish them to your height of pleasure.

Thou foolish Frier, and thou pernicious woman

Compact with her that's gone: thinkst thou, thy oathes,

Though they would swear downe each particular Saint,

Were testimonies against his worth, and credit

That's seald in approbation? you, *Lord Escalus*

Sit with my Cozen, lend him your kinde paines

To finde out this abuse, whence 'tis deriu'd.

There is another Frier that set them on,

Let him be sent for.

Peter. Would he were here, my Lord, for he indeede

Hath set the women on to this Complaint;

Your Prouost knowes the place where he abides,

And he may fetch him.

Duke. Goe, doe it instantly:

And you, my noble and well-warranted Cosen

Whom it concernes to heare this matter forth,

Doe with your iniuries as seemes you best

In any chastisement; I for a while

Will leaue you; but stir not you till you haue

Well determin'd vpon these Slanderers. Exit.

Esc. My Lord, we'll doe it thoroughly: Signior *Lu-*

cio, did not you say you knew that *Frier Lodowick* to be a

dishonest person?

Luc. *Cucullus non facit Monachum*, honest in nothing

but in his Clothes, and one that hath spoke most villa-

nous speeches of the Duke.

Esc. We shall intreat you to abide heere till he come,

and inforce them against him: we shall finde this Frier a

notable fellow.

Luc. As any in *Vienna*, on my word.

Esc. Call that same *Isabell* here once againe, I would

speake with her: pray you, my Lord, giue mee leaue to

question, you shall see how I'll handle her.

Luc. Not better then he, by her owne report.

Esc. Say you?

Luc. Marry sir, I thinke, if you handled her priuately

shee